



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
Washington, D.C. 20231  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/709,035	11/08/2000	Jean Woloszko	A-14	2565

21394 7590 09/17/2002

ARTHROCARE CORPORATION  
680 VAQUEROS AVENUE  
SUNNYVALE, CA 94085-3523

EXAMINER

COHEN, LEE S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3739

DATE MAILED: 09/17/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Applicant(s)

09/709,035

Applicant(s)

WOLOSZKO ET AL.

Examiner

Lee S. Cohen

Art Unit

3739

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-85 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 4,5,28-31,49,50,66,67 and 71-74 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,6-27,32,34-48,51-60,62-65,68-70,75-78 and 80-85 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 33,61 and 79 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Election/Restrictions***

Claims 4, 5, 28-31, 49, 50, 66, 67, and 71-74 stand withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention and species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in Paper No. 5.

### ***Specification***

The use of the trademark TEFLON has been noted in this application. It should be capitalized wherever it appears and be accompanied by the generic terminology.

Although the use of trademarks is permissible in patent applications, the proprietary nature of the marks should be respected and every effort made to prevent their use in any manner which might adversely affect their validity as trademarks.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 21-24, 26, 27, 35-37, 39, 40, 59, 60, 65, 68-70, and 84 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 21 – “the longitudinal axis” in lines 4 and 6 lacks antecedent basis. Claims 22 and 24 fail to structurally associate the return electrode with the previously recited elements. Claim 26 fails to structurally associate the digestion electrode with the previously recited elements. Claim 27 fails to structurally associate the fluid delivery port with the previously recited elements. Claim 39 – “the return electrode” lacks antecedent basis. Claim 40 – “the resection electrode support

Art Unit: 3739

member” lacks antecedent basis. Claim 59 sets forth step (h); such a recital is vague since steps (f) and (g) do not appear in the chain of dependency. Claim 60 sets forth step (i); such a recital is vague since steps (f), (g), and (h) do not appear in the chain of dependency. Claim 69 – references to the “resection electrode” in lines 2 and 4 fail to accurately refer back to their antecedent. Claim 84 – reference to the “resection electrode” in line 4 fails to accurately refer back to its antecedent.

Claim 40 contains the trademark/trade name TEFLON. Where a trademark or trade name is used in a claim as a limitation to identify or describe a particular material or product, the claim does not comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. See *Ex parte Simpson*, 218 USPQ 1020 (Bd. App. 1982). The claim scope is uncertain since the trademark or trade name cannot be used properly to identify any particular material or product. A trademark or trade name is used to identify a source of goods, and not the goods themselves. Thus, a trademark or trade name does not identify or describe the goods associated with the trademark or trade name. In the present case, the trademark/trade name is used to identify/describe a particular product and, accordingly, the identification/description is indefinite.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

Art Unit: 3739

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 1-3, 6, 7, 9, 16-20, 22, 24-27, 32, 34, 37-45, 75-78, and 80-84 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Sharkey et al (6,379,350). In particular, applicant's attention is directed to column 9, line 55+ where the electrodes are adapted for mechanical severing. Further, the return electrode functions as a digestion electrode in the embodiments where it is located within the aspiration lumen.

Claims 41 and 43-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Underwood et al (6,283,961). Applicant's attention is directed to Figures 6-8 and 10. The use of the reference is proper in light of the different inventive entity.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 8, 10-14, 23, and 48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sharkey et al (6,379,350). Particular structural features of the wire and the particular voltage limitations would have been obvious design expedients to the skilled artisan since they merely adapt the apparatus for well known electrosurgical procedures.

Art Unit: 3739

Claims 15, 51-60, 62-65, 68-70, and 85 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sharkey et al (6,379,350) in view of Baker (5,785,705). Sharkey et al discloses the basic apparatus and method except for the insulation of the wire, the particular temperature range, and movement of the apparatus during treatment. Baker discloses the insulation and temperature features to have been well known to direct the energy and effect particular procedures. Accordingly, the use of these features in Sharkey et al would have been obvious to control the application of energy. Further, particular movements of the apparatus would have been obvious since the movement is dependent upon the procedure to be effected.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 21, 35, and 36 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 33, 61, and 79 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Conclusion***

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The other cited art discloses similar devices.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lee S. Cohen whose telephone number is 703-308-2998. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 7:00-3:30.

Art Unit: 3739

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Linda Dvorak can be reached on 703-308-0994. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9302 for regular communications and 703-872-9303 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0858.



Lee S. Cohen  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3739

LSC  
September 11, 2002